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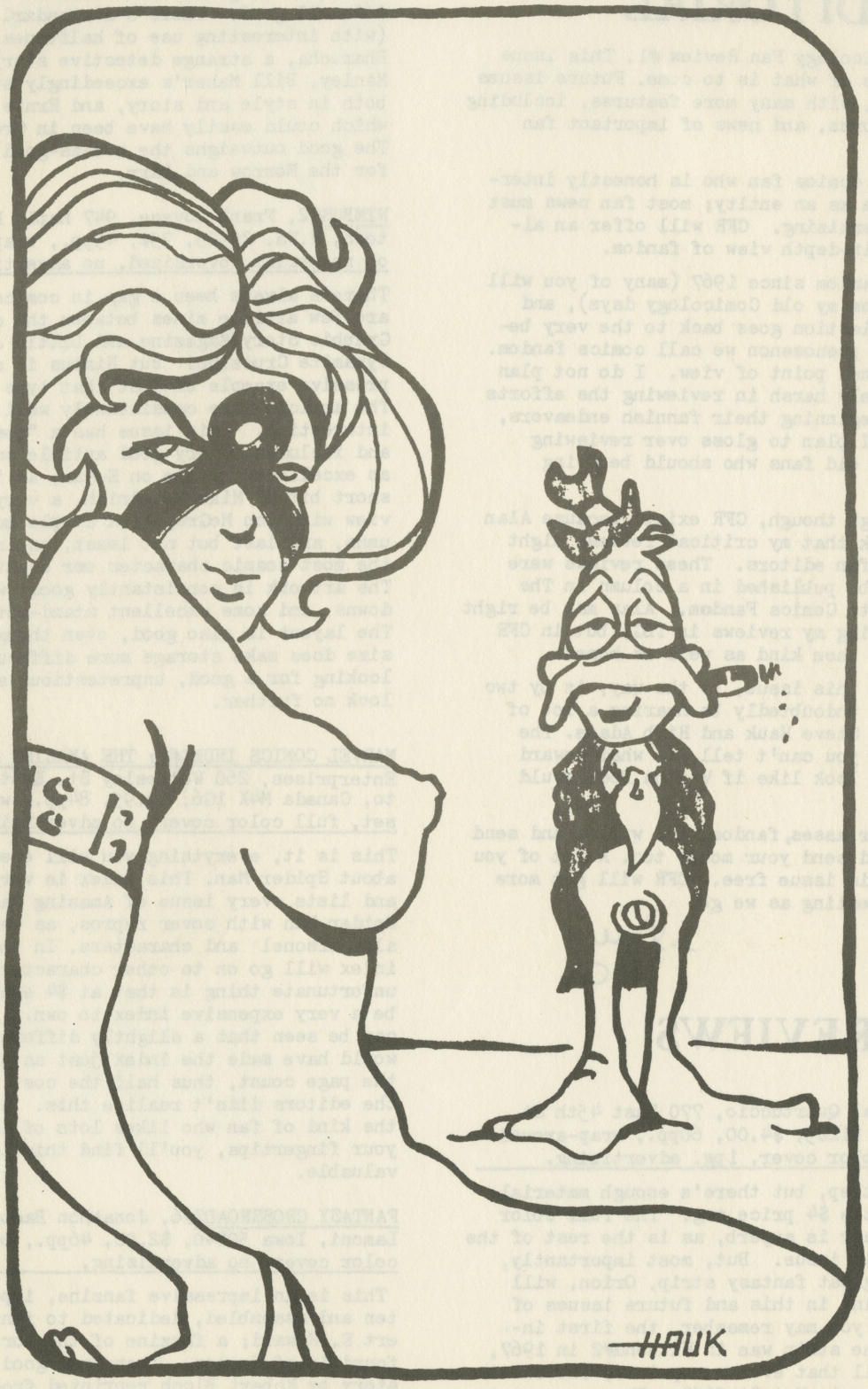
COMICOLOGY FAN REVIEW #1



April 1976

COMICOLOGY FAN REVIEW is published monthly by Doug Fratz, 1810 Metzerott Road, Apt. 14, Adelphi, Maryland 20783, for the purpose of reviewing all possible fan publications and activities. All fanzines for review should be sent to Doug Fratz. Subscription rates: 6/$2.00, 12/$3.50, sample copies are 40¢. Fanzine editors will receive the issue containing their review free.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Comicology Fan Review #1. This issue is just a taste of what is to come. Future issues will be larger, with many more features, including convention reports, and news of important fan projects.

CFR is for the comics fan who is honestly interested in fandom as an entity; most fan news must be read in advertizing. CFR will offer an alternate, more in-depth view of fandom.

I've been in fandom since 1967 (many of you will remember me from my old Comicology days), and my fanzine collection goes back to the very beginning of the phenomenon we call comics fandom. I have a seasoned point of view. I do not plan to be excessively harsh in reviewing the efforts of fans just beginning their fannish endeavors, any more than I plan to gloss over reviewing the efforts of old fans who should be doing better work.

Strangely enough though, CFR exists because Alan Light did think that my critical reviews might alienate some fan editors. These reviews were originally to be published in a column in The Buyer's Guide to Comics Fandom. Alan may be right about not wanting my reviews in TBG, but in CFR I hope to make them kind as well as honest.

The artwork in this issue, by the way, is by two artists you'll undoubtedly be hearing a lot of in the future, Steve Hauk and Rich Adams. The cover, in case you can't tell, is what Howard The Duck would look like if Vaughn Bode would have done him.

So get off your asses, fandom, and write, and send your views. And send your money too. A lot of you are getting this issue free. CFR will get more and more interesting as we go.

-Doug

REVIEWS

HOT STUF'#2, Sal Quartuccio, 770 East 45th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11203, $4.00, 60pp., wrap-around offset, full color cover, 1pg. advertizing.

The price is steep, but there's enough material to cover even the $4 price tag. The full color cover by Ken Barr is superb, as is the rest of the art by Barr this issue. But, most importantly, Gray Morrow's great fantasy strip, Orion, will finally see print in this and future issues of Hot Stuf'. (As you may remember, the first installment of the strip was in Witzend#2 in 1967, and that was all that ever saw print.) The first two chapters are in Hot Stuf'#2. They are not to be missed. Among the other features are several examples of a most common fanzine fare: short joke strips by excellent artists letting their hair down and getting the pleasure of doing something unsaleable. The most flagrant example is a three page strip by Bob Kline, ending in an idiotic sex joke. A two pager by Mike Vosburg that is much the same, idiotic with sex. The Mist, drawn well by Will Meugniot, is the same, with violence substituted for sex in the punchline. And finally, Rich Corben spends three pages doing the same thing, but damn he does it well! The other material runs the gamut from standard to strange, but it's all good. There's a standard horror story (with interesting use of halftones) by Fership Bharucha, a strange detective story by Keenan and Manley, Bill Maher's exceedingly strange strip, both in style and story, and Ernie Colon's strip, which could easily have been in Creepy or Eerie. The good outweighs the not-as-good here; buy it for the Morrow and Barr.

NIMBUS#2, Frank Lovece, 947 Maple Dr.,#15, Morgantown, W.Va. 26505, 75¢, 45pp., wrap-around offset on newsprint, oversized, no advertizing.

There's always been a gap in comics fandom: there are few article zines between the quality of Graphic Story Magazine and Little Jimmy Neofan's Dynamite Crudzine. But Nimbus is a quietly impressive example of just that type of fanzine. The articles are consistantly well written and interesting. This issue has a "cosmic" theme, and includes a very good article on Adam Strange, an excellent article on E-Man, an interesting short bit by Mike Friedrich, a very good interview with Don McGregor, a couple more good columns, and last but not least, an interview with the most cosmic character ever created, God. The The artwork is consistantly good, with a few letdowns, and some excellent stand-outs by Leialoha. The layout is also good, even though the large size does make storage more difficult. If you're looking for a good, unpretentious article zine, look no further.

MARVEL COMICS INDEX#1: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, G&T Enterprises, 260 Wellesley St. East, #2203, Toronto, Canada M4X 1G6, $3.95, 84pp., wrap-around offset, full color cover, no advertizing.

This is it, everything you will ever want to know about Spider-Man. This index is very complete, and lists every issue of Amazing Fantasy and Spider-Man with cover repros, as well as indexing all personel and characters. In the future, the index will go on to other characters. The only unfortunate thing is that at $4 each, this will be a very expensive index to own. It immediately can be seen that a slightly different layout would have made the index just as useful at half the page count, thus half the cost. It's too bad the editors didn't realize this. Still, if you're the kind of fan who likes lots of information at your fingertips, you'll find this index quite valuable.

FANTASY CROSSROADS#6, Jonathon Bacon, Box 147, Lamoni, Iowa 50140, $2.00, 46pp., offset, two color cover, no advertizing.

This is an impressive fanzine, impeccably written and assembled, dedicated to fantasy and Robert E. Howard; a fanzine of the sort most often found in sf fandom. There's a good out-of-print story by Robert Bloch reprinted from Weird Tales, and the second part of an H.P. Lovecraft debate between L. Sprague de Camp and Dirk Mosig, which Sprague is trying to end. (Ah, if only comics fans could be found engaging in such scholarly

debates which end up vicious battles!) There are reviews, articles, letters, et cetera, all well written and interesting. The artwork is consistantly excellent (I'm continually impressed by Gene Day), and the layout is handsome. It's a good buy for fantasy fans, and a must for REH fans.

THE INVINCIBLE FANZINE#2, David Friedlander, 6367 Burchfield Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217, $1.00, 12pp. offset, 2½pp. advertizing.

God, I wonder what #1 looked like... This fanzine is apparently by a fourteen year old editor and his friends, and it looks it. The editor cannot type (all capitals, no spaces between sentenses) and has virtually no knowledge of grammar. It is virtually impossible to read. It is filled with 200 word articles, along with some 400 word articles that make one wish they were only 200 words. To be kind, I won't even mention the artwork. And on top of all that, that is not a typo up there, David wants $1 for the mess. Even if you feel masochistic or even overly kind, don't buy this until the price goes down.

CINEFANTASTIQUE v.4#4, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park, Ill. 60303, $2.50, 48pp. wrap-around offset, full color cover, 2½pp. advertizing.

I really don't know why this is just a fanzine. Put Cinefantastique on any newsstand and it would look and read better than 90% of the other magazines. (And it would probably be sold at $1-$1.50 instead of $2.50). The lead article is on The Day The Earth Stood Still. It is beaytifully written, and a must for anyone who has seen and enjoyed the 1950s sf classic. All the other articles and reviews are equally interesting and well-written, including one page of panning of Space: 1999, although, unfortunately, in one page one can't begin to touch on the idiocy of the series. This fanzine is a must for even the casual film fan.

STAR REACH#3, Mike Friedrich, P.O. Box 385, Hayward, Cal. 94543, $1.00, 54pp., wrap-around offset, full color covers, comic size, one pg. advertizing.

The highlight of this issue of Star Reach (the ground level comic) is a supurb S&S strip by Frank Brunner. Except for possibly a strip adaption of the song Wooden Ships by Steve Leialoha, nothing else in the issue measures up to Brunner, but for that alone, get it.

PUDGE, GIRL BLIMP, Mike Friedrich, address above, $1.25, 52pp. offset, color covers, comic size, 1pg. advertizing.

The adventures of Pudge are charming, warm and humerous. Lee Marrs shows us underground cartooning at its best.

FAN-THING#1, Keith Tuxhorn, 8 Karl Lane, Springfield, Ill. 62702, 30¢, 36pp. ditto, offset covers, no advertizing.

What this fannish stripzine lacks in slick quality, it makes up for in charm. Keith Tuxhorn and Matt Feazell put alot of themselves into this fanzine, giving it a personality of its own. I especially liked the second strip: an sf truck driver story. If you're looking for a nice, unpretentious stripzine, this is it.

HARTMANN COMICS#2, Box 1187, Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421, 25¢, 20pp. offset, no advertizing.

This issue comes out looking like an underground comic for 13 year olds. Indestructable rhubarb plant indeed!

COMIC BOOK#6, A. J. Hanley, 6238 N. Winthrop Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60660, $1.00, 36pp. offset, no advertizing.

Hanley never fails to amuse. And Comic Book is all Hanley. There's Goodguy, Moms Marvel, The Mitey Buggers, Dick Drake, and All American Jack. If you have already been iniated into Hanleydom, you probably already have this issue, but if you never really got into his work before, do it now.

THE COMIC WRITER#8, John. D. Hemmings, 224 East Mill Rd., Long Valley, N.J. 07853, 40¢, 19pp., mimeo, offset covers, no advertizing.

This fanzine is in need of material. When I was through reading it, I had to check back to see what took up the nineteen pages. There are two fair short fiction pieces. There's a fairly interesting interview with Ivan Snyder, head of Marvel and DC merchandising, with pictures. But everything is very short. The artwork is good, except for the back cover. But still, TCW feels like a first issue, and this is its eighth! This may work its way slowly into a good fanzine. Buy it and help the editor.

THE SPACE GAMER#3, Metagaming Concepts, Box 15346 DMA, Austin, Texas 78761, $1.00, 24pp. offset, half-sized, no advertizing.

This is the only fanzine about sf and fantasy games. It seems that some people are really into the field in a big way. The price is high, but if you're a game freak, it's the only ballgame in town.

CLAY GEERDES COMIX WORLD#43, Clay Geerdes, P.O. Box 507, Cotati, Cal. 94928, $3.50/12, 2pp. offset, some advertizing.

Comix World is about the only fanzine about the undergrounds. It's mostly news, which is why Clay doesn't publish larger, and less often (thus saving postage). The material is good, even if the layout is necessarily crowded. It's a must for underground freaks.

THE MARVEL ART REVIEW#1, Art Gimbus, 142 Mill Hill Ave., Bridgeport, Conn. 06610, 60¢, 36pp. offset, halfsize wraparound, 3pp. advertizing.

After the huge advertizing campaign, TMAR is a slight letdown. But the idea is good. TMAR will review the Marvel comics as they hit the stands. There has never been a review zine for new comics before. The editor is oldtime fan writer Thom Fagan. He does a rather good article on Howard The Duck that suffers from a truncated style. There's a character index of The Defenders, and a small article on investments in Marvel comics. And then there's the reviews. They're not impressive yet, but they should get better. The artwork is disappointing too, except for the Frank McLaughlin cover. Hopefully, Thom will be able to pull TMAR up in quality to its promo-image in a month or two.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT#1, Irjax Enterprises, Inc., 13016 St. Charles Pl., Rockville, Md. 20853, $1.00, 24pp. offset, tabloid on newsprint, two color cover, 7pp. advertizing.

Media Spotlight is a Star Trek fanzine/magazine/newspaper that doesn't say so, but still is. Editor Steve Hauk did a great job on the layouts and graphics. The material is all rather good, and the numerous photos of interest if you are a Star Trek fan, or even better, a Star Trek fanatic. Try it if you are.

DOUG FRATZ
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